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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON

HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

MICHAEL D. BOPP, STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL  
JOYCE A. RECHTSCHAFFEN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR AND COUNSEL

December 15, 2005

Andrew S. Fishel  
Managing Director  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Fishel:

We are writing in regard to your compliance with the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (IPIA). The FCC's 2005 Performance and Accountability Report said that two of the eight programs tested, the Universal Service Fund's Schools and Libraries Program and High Cost Support Program beneficiary payments, "appear to have sufficient volume and error rates to warrant further investigation." We understand that these programs are complex and pose difficulty in complying with the requirement to measure statistically the rate of improper payments. However, we are concerned that even 3 years after enactment of IPIA, the first step toward reducing and eliminating improper payments—doing a risk assessment of programs—has still not yet been taken.

As part of our oversight of the effectiveness and efficiency of Federal financial management, our Subcommittee needs to have the best data available so that we know what work on improper payments remains to be done. Risk assessments and estimates of improper payments must be completed in order to achieve compliance with IPIA. Until we have those from each agency—as required under law—we cannot carry out oversight in a thorough manner. The ultimate goal is to eliminate improper payments in federal agencies and illustrate impeccable stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

In order to work with your agency in achieving full compliance with IPIA, we ask that you provide the Subcommittee with detailed answers to the following questions for the non-compliant programs mentioned above:

- 1) What obstacles have prevented your agency from providing estimates of improper payments in fiscal years 2002 through 2005?
- 2) When will you have estimates of improper payments available?
- 3) What steps are you taking, even in the absence of estimates, to reduce the risk of improper payments at your agency?

Please provide and return the requested information to

Liz Scranton, Chief Clerk  
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and  
International Security  
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
439 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Please contact Robin Landauer with Senator Coburn's staff at 202.224.2254 or John  
Kilvington with Senator Carper's staff at 202.224.7061 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Tom Coburn  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Federal Financial  
Management, Government Information,  
and International Security



Tom Carper  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Federal Financial  
Management, Government Information,  
and International Security